

Going for the Gold: Why Staging Your Home to Sell is Like Training for the Olympics

Selling your home is a competition, but it doesn't have to be as challenging as the Olympics if you employ these 5 simple steps.

At age 12 my gym teacher suggested gymnastic lessons. My parents agreed, and what started as 1 hour a week at the gym, turned into more than 3 hours each day, 6 days a week.

Little did I know at the time that the ability to endlessly hold a handstand would teach me so many of life's lessons—and all before leaving for college at the age of 18.

Like any athlete, I was just doing something I loved and was passionate about. And like many athletes, years later I still think back to the lessons gymnastics taught me.

As the credit card commercial says, you can place a price on the cost of a gymnastic lesson, the equipment, and even the coaching, but the lessons learned are priceless. So even if you've never participated in organized sports, there is no reason you can't learn from the experiences of others.

Motivational speaker Tony Robbins in *Personal Power!* explains that people are driven to act by either inspiration or desperation. Or...people take action based on emotion.

Athletes have a passion for their sport and a desire to achieve, but have you stopped to think about what you are trying to achieve with the sale of your home? Is it to sell quickly or for the highest price possible? Or is it something more, something bigger, something only you can feel?

For example, will the sale of your home allow you to downsize to an easier condominium lifestyle, never having to mow the lawn or shovel snow again? Is your desire to help a loved one move to assisted living? Imagine your relief at knowing that someone will always be available to take care of him/her. Or, will a move give your children a better life, realized through quality schools and a safer neighborhood?

How will the sale of your home make you feel? These are the emotions that drive you to sell.

Now, what do you need to do—and what are you willing to do—to achieve this goal?



Step 1 – Hire a Coach

All Olympic athletes have a coach. Even Michael Phelps, after winning 21 Olympic medals, still depends on his coach to succeed. Sure, Phelps is the one who needs to perform, but without someone trained to properly direct his energy, how does he know he's not just spinning his wheels?

When you're selling your home, it's a good idea to engage the services of a professional coach, also known as a home stager. Seek help from a professional who sees your home's potential and will help you achieve a perfect score from critical home buyers.

A good coach will assess your home to help create a focused and realistic plan based on your budget and abilities. For some do-it-yourselfers, all they'll need is a 2-to-4-hour consultation. Some will require a little more assistance; others will want it all done for them.

Step 2 – Set Realistic Goals

Once you know what needs to be done to properly prepare your home for sale, you'll want to see how you can achieve these goals within your timeline and budget. A home stager will help you prioritize tasks and invest wisely in fix-ups and improvements.

Step 3 – Commit to Achieving Your Goals

This step seems simple—and it doesn't take much time, sweat or money—but don't be fooled. In sports, as in anything in life, commitment—or mental discipline—is often the most challenging aspect and what creates winners.

Step 4 – Get Psyched!

All athletes know that attitude is everything. As Gabby Douglas said after winning the all-around gold in gymnastics, "Hard days are where champions are made." Selling your home is not going to be easy, but what worthwhile venture is?

Step 5 – Execute

This sounds like the hardest step, but with the plan you've created with your home stager, this should be the easiest—and working from a good plan will save time and money. Do as much as you can, focusing on the most important changes first.



Susan Atwell, home staging expert and President of *AtWell Staged Home*, is passionate about staging homes to sell quickly and for top dollar. Contact Susan for more information or to schedule an appointment.

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